

PROSPECTUS
OF
THE ANTI-JACOBIN;
OR,
WEEKLY EXAMINER.

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————— *Possit quid vivida virtus*
Experiare, licet: nec longe scilicet hostes
Quærendi.

AT a moment, when whatever may be the habits of inquiry and the anxiety for information upon subjects of public concern diffused among all ranks of people, the vehicles of intelligence are already multiplied in a proportion nearly equal to this encreased demand, and to the encreased importance and variety of matter; some apology may perhaps be necessary for the obtrusion of a new Paper upon the World: and some account may reasonably be expected of the views and principles on which it founds its pretensions to notice, before it can hope to make its way through the crowd of competitors, which have gotten the start of it in the race for public favour.

THE grounds upon which such pretensions have usually been rested by those who have engaged in undertakings of this kind, are accuracy, variety and priority of Intelligence, connections at home, correspondences abroad, and, above all, a profession of impartial and unprejudiced attention to all opinions, and to all parties and descriptions of men.

ON none of these Topics is it Our intention to enlarge.

OF Our means of information, and of the use which We make of them, our readers will, after a very short trial, be enabled to form their own opinion. And to that trial We confidently commit ourselves: professing, however, at the same time, that if the only advantage which We were desirous of holding out to our Readers, were that of having it in our power to apprize them an hour or a day sooner than those Journals, which are already in their hands, of any event however important,—We should bring to the undertaking much less anxiety for success, and should state our claims on public attention with much less boldness, than We are disposed to do in the consciousness of higher purposes, and more beneficial views.

NOVELTY indeed We have to announce. For what so new in the present state of the daily and weekly PRESS (We speak generally, though there are undoubtedly exceptions which we may have occasion to point out hereafter) as THE TRUTH? To this object alone it is that Our labours are dedicated. It is the constant violation, the disguise, the perversion of the Truth, whether in narrative or in argument, that will form the principal subject of our WEEKLY

EXAMINATION: and it is by a diligent and faithful discharge of this duty,—by detecting falsehood,—and rectifying error,—by correcting misrepresentation, and exposing and chastising malignity,—that We hope to deserve the reception which We solicit, and to obtain not only the approbation of the Country to our attempt, but its thanks for the motives which have given birth to it.

THESE are strong words. But We are conscious of intending in earnest what they profess. How far the execution of our purpose may correspond with the design, it is for others to determine. It is ours to state that design fairly, and in the spirit in which we conceive it.

OF the utility of such a purpose, if even tolerably executed, there can be little doubt, among those persons (a very large part of the community) who must have found themselves, during the course of the last few years, perplexed by the multiplicity of contradictory accounts of almost every material event that has occurred in that eventful and tremendous period; and who must anxiously have wished for some public channel of information on which they could confidently rely for forming their opinion.

BUT before We can expect sufficient credit from persons of this description, to enable us to supply such a defect, and to assume an office so important, it is natural that they should require some profession of our principles as well as of our purposes; in order that they may judge not only of our ability to communicate the information which We promise, but of our intention to inform them aright.

TO that freedom from *partiality* and *prejudice*, of which We have spoken above, by the profession of which so many of our Contemporaries recommend themselves, We make little pretension,—at least in the sense in which those terms appear now too often to be used.

WE have not arrived (to our shame perhaps we avow it) at that wild and unhackled freedom of thought, which rejects all habit, all wisdom of former times, all restraints of ancient usage, and of local attachment; and which judges upon each subject, whether of politics or morals, as it arises, by lights entirely its own, without reference to recognized principle, or established practice.

WE confess, whatever disgrace may attend such a confession, that We have not so far gotten the better of the influence of long habits and early education, not so far inhibited that spirit of liberal indifference, of diffused and comprehensive philanthropy, which distinguishes the candid character of the present age, but that We have our feelings, our preferences; and our affections, attaching on particular places, manners, and institutions, and even on particular portions of the human race.

IT may be thought a narrow and illiberal distinction—but We avow ourselves to be *partial* to the COUNTRY in which we live, notwithstanding the daily panegyrics which we read and hear on the superior virtues and endowments of its rival and hostile neighbours. We are *prejudiced* in favour of *her* Establishments, civil and religious; though without claiming for either that ideal perfection, which modern philosophy professes to discover in the other more luminous systems which are arising on all sides of us.

THE safety and prosperity of *these kingdoms*, however unimportant they may seem in abstract contemplation when compared with the more extensive, more beautiful, and more productive parts of the world, do yet excite in our minds a peculiar interest and anxiety; and will probably continue to occupy a share of our attention by no means justified by the proportional consequence which speculative reasoners may think proper to assign to them in the scale of the universe.

We should be averse to hazarding the smallest part of the practical happiness of *this Country*; though the sacrifice should be recommended as necessary for accomplishing throughout the world an uniform and beautiful system of theoretical liberty: and We should at all times exert our best endeavours for upholding its constitution, even with all the human imperfections which may belong to it, though We were assured that on its ruins might be erected the only pillar that is yet wanting to complete the "*most glorious fabric which the Integrity and Wisdom of Man have raised since the Creation.*"

IF, as Philosopher Monge avers, in his eloquent and instructive address to the Directory, "*The Government of England and the French Republick cannot exist together,*" We do not hesitate in our choice; though well aware that in that choice we may be much liable, in the opinion of many critics of the present day, to the imputation of a want of candour or of discernment.

ADMIRERS of military heroism, and dazzled by military success in common with other men, We are yet even *here* conscious of some qualification and distinction in our feelings: We acknowledge ourselves apt to look with more complacency on bravery and skill, when displayed in the service of our Country, than when We see them directed against its interests or its safety; and however equal the claims to admiration in either case may be, We feel our hearts grow warmer at the recital of what has been achieved by HOWE, by JERVIS, or by DUNCAN, than at the "*glorious victory of Jemappe,*" or "*the immortal battle of the bridge of Lodi.*"

IN MORALS We are equally old fashioned. We have not yet learned the modern refinement of referring in all considerations upon human conduct, not to any settled and preconceived principles of right and wrong, not to any general and fundamental rules which experience, and wisdom, and justice, and

the common consent of mankind have established, but to the internal admonitions of every man's judgment or conscience in his own particular instance.

WE do not dissemble,—that We reverence LAW,—We acknowledge USAGE,—We look even upon PRESCRIPTION without hatred or horror. And We do not think these, or any of them, less safe guides for the moral actions of men, than that new and liberal system of ETHICS, whose operation is not to bind but to loosen the bands of social order; whose doctrine is formed not on a system of reciprocal duties, but on the supposition of individual, independent, and unconnected rights; which teaches that all men are pretty equally honest, but that some have different notions of honesty from others, and that the most received notions are for the greater part the most faulty.

WE do not subscribe to the opinion, that a sincere conviction of the truth of no matter what principle, is a sufficient defence for no matter what action; and that the only business of moral enquiry with human conduct is to ascertain that in each case the principle and the action agree: We have not yet persuaded ourselves to think it a sound, or a safe doctrine, that every man who can divest himself of a moral sense in theory, has a right to be with impunity and without disguise a scoundrel in practice. It is not in our creed, that ATHEISM is as good a faith as CHRISTIANITY, provided it be professed with equal sincerity; nor could we admit it as an excuse for MURDER, that the murderer was in his own mind conscientiously persuaded that the murdered might for many good reasons be better out of the way.

OF all these and the like principles,—in one word, of JACOBINISM in all its shapes, and in all its degrees, political and moral, public and private, whether as it openly threatens the subversion of States, or gradually saps the foundations of domestic happiness, We are the avowed, determined, and irreconcilable enemies. We have no desire to divest ourselves of these inveterate prejudices; but shall remain stubborn and incorrigible in resisting every attempt which may be made either by argument or (what is more in the charitable spirit of modern reformers) by force, to convert us to a different opinion.

It remains only to speak of the details of our PLAN.

IT is our intention to publish Weekly, during the Session of Parliament, a Paper, containing,

FIRST, An Abstract of the important events of the week, both at home and abroad.

SECONDLY, Such Reflections as may naturally arise out of them: and,

THIRDLY, A contradiction and confutation of the falsehoods and misrepresentations concerning these events, their causes, and their consequences, which may be found in the Papers devoted to the cause of SEDITION and IRRELIGION, to the pay or principles of FRANCE.

THIS last, as it is by far the most important, will in all probability be the most copious of the three heads; and is that to which, above all others, We wish to direct the attention of our Readers.

WE propose diligently to collect, as far as the range of our own daily reading will enable us, and we promise willingly

to receive, from whatever quarter they may come, the several articles of this kind which require to be thus contradicted or confuted; which will naturally divide themselves into different classes, according to their different degrees of stupidity or malignity.

THERE are, for instance (to begin with those of the highest order), the LIES of the Week; the downright, direct, unblushing falsehoods, which have no colour or foundation whatever, and which must at the very moment of their being written, have been known to the writer to be wholly destitute of truth.

NEXT in rank come MISREPRESENTATIONS which, taking for their ground-work facts in substance true, do so colour and distort them in description, as to take away all semblance of their real nature and character.

LASTLY, The most venial, though by no means the least mischievous class, are MISTAKES; under which description are included all those Hints, Conjectures, and Apprehensions, those Anticipations of Sorrow and Deprecations of Calamity, in which Writers who labour under too great an anxiety for the Public Welfare are apt to indulge; and which, when falsified by the event, they are generally too much occupied to find leisure to retract or disavow:—A trouble which We shall have great pleasure in taking off these Gentlemen's hands.

To each of these several articles We shall carefully affix the name and date of the Publication from which We may take the liberty of borrowing it.

WITH regard to the PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT, We shall not fail to mark to Our Readers the progress of the public business; though it does not enter into our Plan to give a regular detail of the Debates: nor would the limits of our Paper allow of it.

WE have a further reason for not occupying this province, which will equally account for our determination, not to receive Advertisements—our earnest desire not to lessen the circulation of any existing Public Print.

IT is obvious upon every ground of fairness and of policy, that We must entertain this desire very strongly with regard to the respectable Papers which are directed by principles and attachments like our own: an attachment (We have no wish to disguise it) to the cause of a GOVERNMENT, with whose support, whose popularity and consequent means of exertion, the circumstances of the present times have essentially connected the existence of THIS COUNTRY as an independent Nation.

As little should We wish to circumscribe the sale of those JOURNALS, upon whose errors or perverseness, upon whose false statements and pernicious doctrines We reckon for the main support, as they have been the principal cause of our undertaking. These We would entreat to proceed with fresh vigour and increased activity. It is our wish to be seen together, and to be compared with them. Every week of misrepresentation will be followed by its weekly comment:—and with this corrective faithfully administered, the longest course of MMORNING CHRONICLES or MMORNING POSTS, of STARS or COURIERS, may become not only innocent but beneficial.

WITH these views then We commence our undertaking. Whatever may be the success, or the merit of its execution in our hands;—the want of something like it has so long been felt and deplored by all thinking and honest men, that We cannot doubt of the approbation and encouragement with which the attempt will be received.

WE claim the support, and We invite the assistance, of ALL, who think with us that the circumstances and character of the age in which We live require every exertion of every man, who loves his COUNTRY in the old way, in which till of late years the LOVE of one's COUNTRY was professed by most men, and by none disclaimed or reviled;—of ALL who think that the PRESS has been long enough employed principally as an engine of destruction; and who wish to see the experiment fairly tried whether that engine by which many of the States which surround us have been overthrown, and others shaken to their foundations, may not be turned into an instrument of defence for the ONE remaining COUNTRY, which has ESTABLISHMENTS to protect, and a GOVERNMENT with the spirit, and the power, and the wisdom to protect them;—of ALL who look with respect to public honour, and with attachment to the decencies of private life;—of ALL who have so little deference for the arrogant intolerance of JACOBINISM as still to contemplate the OFFICE and the PERSON of a KING with veneration, and to speak reverently of RELIGION, without apologizing for the singularity of their opinions;—of ALL who think the blessings which we enjoy valuable, and who think them in danger;—and who, while they detest and despise the principles and the professors of that NEW FAITH by which the foundations of all those blessings are threatened to be undermined, lament the lukewarmness with which its propagation has hitherto been resisted, and are anxious, while there is yet time, to make every effort in the cause of their COUNTRY.

